



40 YEARS:

THE ART OF MURRY N. DEPILLARS

3 MARCH - 10 APRIL, 2005

OPENING RECEPTION: 3 MARCH, 5PM

BRADBURY GALLERY

FOWLER CENTER

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

201 OLYMPIC DRIVE

JONESBORO, ARKANSAS

870-972-3471

GALLERY HOURS:

TUESDAY - SATURDAY, NOON - 5PM

SUNDAY, 2 - 5PM

PUBLIC LECTURE: 2 MARCH, 7PM,
FINE ARTS CENTER RECITAL HALL

Bradbury Gallery
Arkansas State University
PO Box 2339
State University, AR 72467

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ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE
PAID
STATE UNIVERSITY
AR 72467
PERMIT NO. 5

40 YEARS



THE ART OF MURRY N. DEPILLARS

Growing-up in the South and West Sides of Chicago, Murry N. DePillars was born to a family that both recognized and encouraged his artistic interests. Jazz and blues clubs, gospel and ethnic music were to form another important aspect for his upbringing. Influenced by musical performances throughout his neighborhood, his childhood experiences provided the foundation for the direction his life would take both as an artist and as an educator.

40 Years: The Art of Murry N. DePillars at the Bradbury Gallery (March 3 through April 10, 2005) has been a lifetime in the making. The exhibit reflects DePillars' early Chicago years while depicting his evolution as an artist. The exhibit is also an artistic testimonial of life long responses to his environment, culture and heritage.

His 1968 *Aunt Jemima*, with menacing spatula in hand, bursts out of one of the pancake boxes that literally is filled with emotional symbolism from the era. In fact, the background for the boxes is the American flag with Chicago police badges as stars. Noted art historian Richard Powell once wrote "...jazz and 'soul' music became the soundtrack for works by painter Murry DePillars." As you look at the exhibition, you clearly will see the effect of music upon his work, and how his early experiences with music merge with his visual art. The most recent Quilt Series reflects a different sensibility. *Talking Quilt-Jubilation* is a vibrant, energetic composition with references to jazz and DePillars' personal African-American heritage. *Talking Quilt-Jubilation* radiates a joyful sense of color and pattern with ancestral symbolism.

When the Chicago-based AFRI-Cobra (African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists) invited DePillars to become a member, the group was led by the late Jeff Donaldson and included other influential black artists such as James Phillips, Frank Smith, Nelson Stevens, Michael Harris, Ron Akili Anderson, Napoleon Jones-Henderson, Adger Cowens and Wadsworth Jarrell. AFRI-Cobra is an artistic forum where members challenge each other's artistic ideas, confronting societal and cultural issues in the USA and abroad.

In 1976, Dr. Murry DePillars was named Dean of the School of the Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University serving until he retired in 1995. Under his leadership, the School of the Arts earned both national and international recognition. He then accepted the position of Executive Vice President at Chicago State University until he retired a second time in 1998 to devote full-time to his art.

DePillars' work is in private and public collections and has been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions and galleries, including the Fay Gold Gallery in Atlanta, Mississippi Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, Orlando Museum of Art, Studio Museum of Harlem, Whitney Museum of American Art, World Expo in Spokane, and recently at Joysmith Gallery in Memphis.

Educated in the public schools of Chicago, DePillars earned an A.A. in Fine Art from Kennedy-King Community College, a B.A. in Art Education and an M.A. in Urban Studies from Roosevelt University. He received his Ph.D. from The Pennsylvania State University.



-Daniel J. Reeves, Dean
College of Fine Arts

Aunt Jemima, 1968
pen, ink, conte crayon on paper
37 1/2" x 32 1/2"

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TALKING QUILT - JUBILATION (QUILT SERIES)

2001

ACRYLIC ON CANVAS

77 1/2" x 26 1/4"

COVER:

QUEEN CANDACE - DIAMOND QUILT

2002

ACRYLIC ON CANVAS

40" x 30"

ALL PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LEEOR

